

have been prevented in the first place, which means to have the Secretary of State and the National Security Adviser pay attention to Africa, which we will do.

Q. Are you possibly thinking of going back—going to Africa?

The President. Well, I'm—one country at a time. [*Laughter*] I'm going to Mexico first. I've got a lot of work to do at home. Gregory—David Gregory brought up a very important issue. It reminds me about how—it should remind you about how involved I'm going to be on pieces of legislation, whether it be patients' bill of rights or tax relief or education reform. I've got a lot of work to do here—to work with the Congress, to make sure that the principles that I think are important are inherent in these different pieces of legislation. I'll be making some trips, but I'm not exactly sure when I would be going to Africa, for example.

Tax Cut Legislation

Q. Mr. President, what is it you think you're going to need to do to get enough Democratic support for your tax cut plan?

The President. Say that again now?

Q. What are you going to have to do to ensure that you get enough Democratic support for your tax cut plan to make sure that it gets down to your desk for a signature?

The President. Well, I appreciate that. The thing I'm going to need to do is to remind Democrats, one, our budget works. That you can set aside payroll taxes for Social Security, set clear priorities, pay down debt, and there's room for the \$1.6 trillion tax cut. It started off at 1.3, and evidently it's grown to 1.6.

Secondly, to remind people in Congress that this tax relief package is fair and positively affects the lives of people who are standing up here by me. It is a positive effect on our economy.

Thirdly, remind them, we'd better act. The economy is slowing down, and we need to act and act as quickly as we possibly can, including working with Congress to make sure the tax cuts can take—as much of the tax cuts as possible can take immediate effect to help people.

Q. If I could follow up, do you favor doing something retroactively, or would you simply

accelerate the benefits in the first year of your plan?

The President. We'll work with Congress on that. The strategy, or the goal—let me put it to you that way—the goal is to get money in the pockets of the working people as quickly as we can.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Carole Segal, owner, Tree Top Toys & Books, Inc.

Videotaped Remarks in a Tribute to Former President Ronald Reagan

February 6, 2001

Laura and I have now spent 2 weeks in the house where you lived for 8 years. Everywhere we look, we find reminders of the great men and women who lived here and the achievements they left behind.

Your achievements, Mr. President, are clear to all Americans. They are found in the spirit of our Nation and the peace of the world.

You came here at a time when our country needed confidence. You told us we could be strong again, at home and abroad. And when you left, we were.

You came to the White House when the cold war was real. You told us, even when few believed it, that the evil empire would pass and that freedom would prevail. And your resolve made it happen.

In your time here, you never tried to seize credit, one of the traits we've always admired most about you. But tonight, on your 90th birthday, America knows where the credit belongs. America knows you came here 20 years ago and changed the world. America knows the good heart that always guided you, the unbending principles that always defined you, the kindness and courage and inner grace that makes you the man you are.

For all of that, your country thanks you, Mr. President. Your country honors you. And your country loves you.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 10:15 a.m. in Room 457 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building for later broadcast on CNN's "Larry King Live." A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Chemical Weapons Convention Inspections

February 5, 2001

Dear _____:

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical Weapons Convention inspections in the United States, submitted pursuant to section 309 of the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act of 1998.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Orrin G. Hatch, chairman, and Patrick Leahy, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Richard Shelby, chairman, and William Duhne, ranking member, Senate Committee on Intelligence; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., chairman, and John Conyers, Jr., ranking member, House Committee on the Judiciary; Porter J. Goss, chairman, and Nancy Pelosi, ranking member, House Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 7. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at the Tax Family Reunion and an Exchange With Reporters

February 7, 2001

The President. Well, Debora, thank you very much. I'm so honored to see you. And thank you for bringing your son and daughter here. The Vice President and I have been looking forward to this family reunion—tax family reunion. The nice thing about this reunion is you don't have any annoying relatives to deal with. [*Laughter*] But we're glad to welcome you to the White House.

One of the best parts of the campaign was to meet the hard-working Americans who really make up the backbone of our country. I'd go to the different cities around our great Nation and get off the airplane, and there'd be a tax family. And it was our way to put a face on a piece of important public policy. It was our way to say, behind all the numbers we were talking about, and to talk about

budget, there were real, live Americans who will benefit.

And I want to thank you all for coming back. I look forward for you to—look forward to thanking you in person. I look forward to you to see the people's house, the place that Laura and I are now fortunate to call home.

I have one message for all the folks that were our tax families and all the folks from around the country: You helped me make my case, and now I intend to make good on my promise. I want it to be said that ours is a plan that fulfills a campaign promise. And that's important. A lot of people look toward the political process and say, "Oh, these candidates just say something and really don't mean it." When I campaigned for meaningful tax relief, I meant it. And tomorrow I'll submit a plan based upon exactly what I said on the campaign trail. I look forward to working with Congress to get the plan passed.

During the course of the campaign, I said it's as if our Nation had erected a toll booth right in the middle of the road of the middle class, making it hard for people to access the middle class, making it hard for hard-working Americans to realize more money for their own. And so we're going to start dismantling that toll booth, brick by brick. It begins by simplifying the code. We'll reduce the rates from five to four.

It recognizes that our tax code is unfair. It is unfair to people who struggle to get ahead. It is unfair for the single mom who lives on the outskirts of poverty, who's working hard to provide for her family. For every additional dollar she makes above \$25,000, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who's wealthy. And that's not right, and it's not fair. It's not what America is all about, as far as I'm concerned. Our tax code makes the code more fair.

It is also fair that everybody who pays taxes should receive relief. And that's why we drop all rates. We drop the top rate, and we drop the bottom rate, and we expand the child credit from \$500 to \$1,000. Under our plan, a family of four making \$50,000 a year will receive a 50-percent cut in the taxes they pay to the Federal Government. The average tax load will decrease by \$2,000—from \$4,000 to \$2,000.